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Message Text

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PAGE 01 BELFAS 00153 021305Z

47
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 IO-10

/077 W
---------- 001839
R 021205Z MAY 75
FM AMCONSUL BELFAST
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 912
INFO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USNAVCOMMSTA LONDONDERRY

UNCLAS BELFAST 153

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, U.K. (N.I.)
SUBJECT: ULSTER ELECTION DAY GENERALLY CALM

REF: BELFAST 150

1. MAY 1, ELECTION DAY FOR DELEGATES TO CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION PASSED IN RELATIVE PEACE. NOBODY KILLED. THERE ONE ATTEMPTED CAR BOMBING, NEAR-RIOT AT CREGGAN HOUSING ESTATE LONDONDERRY AT END OF POLLING WHEN SECURITY FORCES TRANSPORTED BALLOT BOXES, TWO SHOOTING INCIDENTS BELFAST AND REPORTS OF PHYSICAL INTIMIDATION OF VOTERS SOME CATHOLIC AREAS IN PROVINCE. SOME TWENTY THOUSAND SECURITY PERSONNEL UNOBTRUSIVELY ON ALERT.

2. MOST OF DISRUPTION CAUSED BY SCATTERED ATTEMPTS ENFORCE IRISH REPUBLICAN SOCIALIST PARTY AND PROVISIONAL IRA BOYCOTTS. IT BELIEVED CONTRIBUTORY FACTOR IN CREGGAN DISTURBANCE WAS USE ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY TO MOVE BALLOT BOXES RATHER THAN ARMY. OFFICIAL REPUBLICAN CLUBS, SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC AND LABOUR PARTY (SDLP), CENTRIST PARTIES ALLIANCE AND UNIONIST PARTY NORTHERN IRELAND MOST AFFECTED BY DISRUPTIONS. THERE LITTLE IF ANY EFFECT IN
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LOYALIST AREAS. THERE ONE UNCONFIRMED REPORT HOWEVER THAT

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ULSTER VOLUNTEER FORCE OCCUPIED AND STUFFED BALLOT BOXES
AT SIX POLLING PLACES IN WEST BELFAST.

3. OBSERVERS CONFIRMED PREDICTED LOW TURNOUT. ESTIMATE
OF THOSE VOTING RANGE BETWEEN SIXTY AND SEVENTY PER CENT OF
ELIGIBLES ALTHOUGH SIZEABLE POSTAL VOTE COULD INCREASE
PROPORTION. COUNTING BEGAN MAY 2 AND FIRST
RESULTS FROM BELFAST CONSTITUENCIES EXPECTED THIS AFTERNOON.
FINAL RESULTS PROVINCE-WIDE COULD COME AS LATE AS MAY 4.

4. FIRST PLENARY SESSION CONVENTION EXPECTED NEXT WEEK
TO ENABLE DELEGATES ESTABLISH ELIGIBILITY RECEIVE YEARLY
SALARY OF POUNDS STERLING 2500. ONE UNFORESEEN
PROBLEM HAS ARISEN IN CHOOSING APPROPRIATE TITLE FOR
CONVENTION REPRESENTATIVES. SOME LOCAL NEWSMEN ARE
GUESSING THAT M.C. FOR "MEMBER CONVENTION" COULD BE
MISTAKEN FOR MASTER OF CEREMONIES, AN UNFORTUNATE CONNOTATION,
OTHER SPECULATE THAT "CONMEN" WILL NOT BE ACCEPTABLE.

SPICER

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NNN

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